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MEMORANDA

OF THE LATE AFFAIR OF HONOR

BETWEEN

HON. T. L. CLINGMAN,

OF

NORTH CAROLINA,

AND

HON. WILLIAM L. YANCEY,

OF

ALABAMA.

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House of Representatives,

February 13, 1845.

So many demands have been made by my friends for copies of the correspondence between Mr. Clingman and myself, pending the late difficulty between us, and of the basis of the settlement of the affair, that I have thought it best to print the following memoranda for private circulation among them.

W. L. YANCEY.

MEMORANDA.

Washington, City, January 15, 1845.

Wednesday Evening, Jan. 8.—About eight o'clock, p. m. met Mr. Yancey near the gate of the Capitol grounds, on Pennsylvania Avenue. He told me that he had just left the Hon. A. Burt at Tyler's Hotel, with whom he had been holding some conversation relative to a pending difficulty between Mr. Clingman and himself; and requested me to call and see Mr. Burt upon the matter.

Thursday, the 9th.—In the morning sent a note to Mr. Burt, informing him of Mr. Yancey's request, and expressing my readiness to serve him in any way in my power. Mr. B called upon me immediately, and requested me to see Mr. Y. with him. I did so; and eventually the duty of acting as Mr. Y's friend devolved upon me. I then saw for the first time, the following note, which Mr. Clingman had addressed to Mr. Yancey, and Mr. Y's reply:

Mr. Clingman to Mr. Yancey.

House of Representatives, Jan. 7, 1845.

Sir: In the course of your remarks to-day, you declared that you wished to have nothing to say with one possessed of the head and heart of the gentleman from North Carolina, alluding, as I understand, to me, personally.

I desire to know of you, whether, by the use of that expression, you intended towards me, personally, any disrespect, or to be understood that I was deficient in integrity, honor, or any other quality requisite to the character of a gentleman.

I have the honor to be, sir,

Hon. W. L. Yancey. (Signed.) T. L. CLINGMAN.

Mr. Yancey to Mr. Clingman.

House of Representatives, Jan. 8 1845.

Sir: I do not recognize as mine the language attributed to me in your note of yesterday. I send you, extracted from the Globe of the 7th, with my corrections, an accurate report of my words in reference to yourself.* Of the language I did use, or of my motives, I have no explanations to make.

(Signed.) W. L. YANCEY.

Hon. T. L. Clingman.

*The remarks which were enclosed, have been so generally circulated, that it is deemed unnecessary to reprint them here. At that interview, too, Mr. Burt showed me a note from Mr. Clingman to him, informing Mr. B. that he was about leaving for Baltimore, and wished Mr. B. to inform Mr. Y. that he did not intend to let the "discussion stop where it was."

Mr. Yancey and I left for Baltimore in the evening train of cars, where we arrived at 8 o'clock p m, and took lodgings at the Exchange Hotel.

Friday the 10th.—About 10 o'clock, a. m I received a note addressed to me by the Hon. Mr. Causin of Maryland, informing me that a friend of Mr. Clingman would wait upon me at 12 o'clock, m. At that hour, Mr. Charles Lee Jones of Washington city, called upon me, and delivered a note, of which the following is a copy:

Mr. Clingman to Mr. Yancey.

January 10th, 1845.

Sir: The language furnished me as having been used by you, being different from that attributed to you in my first note, I deem it proper to inquire if I am to understand you as having finally declined to give me any satisfactory explanation of it.

Your obedient servant,

Hon. W. L. Yancey. (Signed) T. L. CLINGMAN.

At 2 o'clock p m, I waited upon Mr. Jones with the reply of Mr. Yancey, of which the following is a copy:

Mr. Yancey to Mr. Clingman.

January 10th, 1845.

Sir: The language of your note of to-day appears to me to be indefinite. My note of the 8th corrects the misapprehension under which you seem to labor in attributing to me language different from that [which] was really used by me in the political discussion which took place in the House of Representatives on the 7th, and for which you desired an explanation.

That you might be put in possession of my remarks as regarded yourself, at the earliest possible moment, I enclosed in my note of the 8th a corrected copy. I deem any explanation superflous.

Your obedient servant.

Hon. T. L. Clingman. (Signed.) W. L. YANCEY.

At 5 o'clock p m, Mr. Jones handed me a note of which the following is a copy:

Baltimore, January 10, 1845.

Sir: I am happy to perceive in your reply to my note of this date, what appears to be a disposition for an amicable adjustment of the difficulty between us. I presume that you will now state whether, in the report of your speech, as furnished by you to me, you intended any personal disrespect, or to intimate that I was deficient in integrity, honor, or any other quality requisite to the character of a gentleman.

Your obedient servant,

Hon. W. L. Yancey. Signed.) T. L. CLINGMAN.

At 11 o'clock p m, I delivered to Mr. Jones Mr. Y's reply, of which the following is a copy:

Mr. Yancey to Mr. Clingman.

JANUARY 10, 1845, 10 o'clock, P. M.

SIR: In reply to your note of this afternoon, suggesting that I might now respond to the inquiry which you substantially made in your note of the 7th inst. I have to say, that a perusal of the remarks, which I furnished you on the 8th, will enable you to determine whether they impute to you "any deficiency in integrity, honor, or any other quality requisite to the character of a gentleman," or whether they characterize your conduct as a Representative in Congress; and I must repeat in relation to them that I deem any explanation superfluous.

Your obedient sevant,

Hon. Mr. CLINGMAN. (Signed) W. L. YANCEY.

Mr. Jones felt that this must close the affair. Consulting freely with each other, and mutually unwilling to close the door to all accommodation, Mr. Jones advised the suspending of Mr. Y.'s last note until morning at 9 o'clock. to which I acceded with great pleasure, as we both yet cherished the hope that a plan might be laid to avoid a hostile meeting.

SATURDAY, the 11th.—Went to Barnum's at 10 o'clock, (there having been a misapprehension as to the hour,) and found Mr. Jones expecting me. On reviewing our positions, we found it impossible to do any thing towards adjusting the affair amicably, without the withdrawal of the whole correspondence. We finally agreed to suspend it; and sat down and drew up what we supposed could be subscribed by our mutual principals Mr. Jones opened the correspondence thus:

BALTIMORE, January 11, 1845.

SIR: It being intimated that the first note from Mr. Yancey in reply to Mr. Clingman [passed before we were connected with the affair] may be in the way of an amicable arrangement of the difficulty between those gentlemen, I would suggest the withdrawal of that note, and to let it be considered as never having been in existence. Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed.) CHAS. LEE JONES.

Hon. Mr. HUGER.

I replied as follows:

SATURDAY MORNING, Jan. 11, 1845.

SIR: I join with you most cheerfully in a desire to have the matter pending between our friends adjusted amicably. The difficulty rests on that part of the correspondence which took place before we were brought into the matter. I now meet your suggestion, by offering one in return; that the whole correspondence drop, and we begin *de novo;* hoping thereby that we may be able to place our friends in such position, as may speedily lead to a friendly settlement of the difficulty. The last portion of the correspondence, arising, entirely, out of the first notes, they being removed, the whole appears to be unnecessary, and may as well follow. Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed.) JOHN M. HUGER.

CHARLES LEE JONES, esq.

Mr. Jones replied thus:

BALTIMORE, Jan. 11, 1845.

SIR: I fully agree to the proposition made in your note of this date. We will

therefore consider all the correspondence heretofore passed between Messrs. Clingman and Yancey, as withdrawn.

Most respectfully, your obedient servant,

(Signed.) CH. LEE JONES.

Hon. Mr. HUGER.

Mr. Jones, as for Mr. Clingman, then offered the following note:

BALTIMORE, Jan. 11, 1845.

SIR: Understanding that all former correspondence between us has been withdrawn, at the suggestion of and with the consent of our respective friends, I hope you will now state whether, in making the remarks as published in the Globe newspaper, which are understood to have been revised and corrected by yourself, you intended any personal disrespect to me, or to cast any reflection on my honor or character as a gentleman.

In reply, I tendered as for Mr. Yancy, the following:

BALTIMORE, Jan. 11, 1845.

SIR: Your letter of the 11th is before me, stating that the former correspondence between us, at the suggestion of our respective friends, had been withdrawn.

The remarks in reference to yourself, and substantially reported in the Globe of the 8th, sprung from, and received their tone, almost entirely from the imputations cast upon the motives and character of the great body of the Southern Representatives in the House of Representatives on the 6th instant, by yourself.

The only construction which I, in common with the great body of those gentlemen, could place upon them, demanded and elicited that portion of mine which bore upon you.

Mr C. will at once perceive that he is not entitled to, and must understand me, as refusing to give, any explanation of language elicited by his own imputations upon the character of my brother Representatives.

This note not meeting Mr. Jone's view of the case, I asked him to put on paper, what he would have deemed sufficient; and he at once wrote down the words, as they appear in the following note:

BALTIMORE, January 11, 1845.

SIR: In reply to your note of this date, I have only to say, that the language applied to you in my speech, was made in the heat of political debate, and not intended to be personal.

This being entirely inadmissible, nothing seemed left but to tender him the note of Mr. Yancey already given—dated "January 10, 1845, 10 o'clock p m."

The above corresponden e, passed between Mr. Jones and myself, failing to reach the amicable point desired by both, the original was resumed, as I have intimated, by the delivery of Mr. Y.'s last note, and a challenge from Mr. Clingman to Mr. Yancey followed as a matter of course, in the following words:

BALTIMORE, Jan. 11, 1845.

SIR: Having failed in all my efforts for an amicable adjustment of the diffi-

culty between us, nothing remains for me, but to *demand* of you the satisfaction usual among gentlemen.

Your obedient servant,

The Hon. Mr. YANCEY. (Signed.) T. L. CLINGMAN

This challenge was immediately (verbally) accepted, and I informed Mr. Jones that the weapons would be pistols—the distance, ten paces—the time, Monday morning at 7 o'clock—the place some spot between Beltsville and the District line, near the Washington turnpike, which we would more definitely locate when we met as seconds to lay off the ground, &c. Mr. Jones acceded to every thing, but the time; contending that it was not sufficient to allow him to make his preparations, and reach the ground. He suggested Tuesday morning, the 14th. I insisted upon Monday; and asked him to name the earliest hour in that day, which his convenience would make agreeable. He then named 3 o'clock, p. m. as the hour; to which I assented. Mr. Y. and myself were anxious for a speedy termination of the affair, and were only prevented from naming the next morning, by its being that of Sunday.

At 6 o'clock p m., Mr. Jones and I agreed upon the following:

The following rules and articles are agreed upon, to govern a meeting between the Hon. Wm. L. Yancey of Alabama, and the Hon. T. L. Clingman of North Carolina.

Art 1. Weapons to be used, *smooth bore pistols*, of the usual duelling length.

Art. 2. Distance ten paces, (or thirty feet.)

Art. 3. Pistols to be held *perpendicular*, the muzzles *up or down*, at their election.

Art. 4. The word to be given in a *clear*, *distinct*, and *loud* tone, as follows "*Gentlemen, are you ready: Fire—one—two—three—halt*"—at intervals of one second each.

Art. 5. The wind and sun to be equally divided.

Art. 6. The giving of the *word*, and the choice of *position*, to be decided by the toss of a dollar.

The one winning may elect *either*, but *not both*.

Art. 7. The pistols to be loaded by the seconds with powder and single ball, in the presence of all parties.

Art. 8. Each party will be permitted to have on the ground a surgeon and three friends, all of whom must be unarmed.

Art. 9 The seconds to be armed with pistols, loaded with powder and single ball.

Art 10. The seconds to be permitted to examine the person and dress of each principal.

Art. 11. Neither principal to commence lowering or raising his pistol before the word "*fire*," nor after the word "*halt.*"

We, the undersigned, seconds, bind ourselves to enforce a strict compliance with the foregoing rules and articles. The parties to meet near Beltsville, on the Baltimore and Washington turnpike, at 3 o'clock on Monday, January 13.

(Signed.) JOHN M. HUGER,

(Signed.) CH. LEE JONES.

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Mr. Yancey, Mr. Buchanan, and myself, left Baltimore that night at 8 o'clock in a hack, and drove eighteen miles on the way to the ground.

SUNDAY, the 12th.—Most of the day, under assumed names, we passed at a way-side tavern. In the afternoon Mr. Buchanan left in the cars for Washington; and a kind friend discovering our real characters, fearing an arrest, induced us to turn off the turnpike, and accept his hospitality until the next morning.

MONDAY. the 13th.—At 12 o'clock m. we reached Brown's Hotel, a mile west of Beltsville. Mr Jones soon arrived, and in conjunction, a half mile west of the house, we selected the ground. I won in the choice, and took the giving of the word.

In the meantime, several of Mr. Yancey's friends arrived from Washington —amongst them, besides Mr. Buchanan—Hon. A. Burt, of South Carolina, A. B. Meek, esq of Alabama, Hons. J. E Belser, and R. Chapman of Alabama, Dr. Gwyn of Mississippi, Dr. Tate of Mississippi, Hon. Mr. Saunders of North Carolina.

After being greatly embarrassed by the appearance of the police, who arrested and bound over Messrs. Chapman and Meek, Mr. Yancey and I succeeded in escaping by the back door of the tavern, and reached the ground by a tedious and circuitous route through the woods and fields on foot.

As soon as possible preliminaries were arranged, but not soon enough to prevent the appearance of the police, some four or five of whom came rushing up to within a few feet of Mr. Yancey, when, at the word "fire," an ineffectual exchange of shots took place; and the affair was settled, as set forth in the following:

After a first and ineffectual fire, a consultation followed between the friends of the parties; and upon a suggestion of Hon. Mr. Rayner, of North Carolina, that Mr. Yancey might now retract his personally offensive remarks applicable to Mr. Clingman, Mr. Huger suggested that this difficulty existed: that Mr. Yancey considered Mr. Clingman's speech as casting personal and offensive imputations upon the Southern Democrats. Upon which Mr. Jones, as Mr. Clingman's friend, *at once disclaimed such construction*, and declared that the speech was purely political, and that Mr C. *intended no personal imputation upon any member* of the House of Representatives.

Whereupon Mr. Yancey made *the suggested retraction*.

BELTSVILLE, January 13, 1845.

Accepted for their respective friends by

(Signed.) JOHN M. HUGER.
(Signed.) CHAS. LEE JONES.

I have written out the above memoranda, while the facts are fully impressed upon my memory, and from papers in my possession, and for their correctness am ready to vouch.

JOHN M. HUGER.